

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-13 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSM-05 MCT-01

AID-05 /088 W

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O R 311341Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9352

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 5798

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: AUG. 31 SYRIAN MEDIA HERALD SARKIS VISIT

1. SYRIAN MEDIA HIGHLIGHTED SARKIS VISIT TO DAMASCUS TODAY, IMPROVEMENT OF SITUATION IN LEBANON AND POSTPONEMENT OF ARAB FONMINS MEETING. SARKIS VISIT, ACCORDING TO PRESS, COMES WITHIN "FRAMEWORK OF CONSULTATIONS TO RESTORE ORDER AND STABILITY TO LEBANON. POPULAR CIRCLES IN LEBANON HAVE BECOME OPTIMISTIC AS REGARDS EARLY HALT IN FIGHTING AND CREATION OF POLITICAL SETTLEMENT". (WHILE DAMASCUS RADIO HAS NOT YET ANNOUNCED SARKIS ARRIVAL AS OF 1200L, WE OBSERVED CARAVAN PASSING BY EMBASSY TO PRESIDENCY. SIZE OF MOTORCYCLE ESCORT WAS TYPICAL OF THAT PROVIDED HERE TO VISITING CHIEFS OF STATE.)

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2. DR. KHULI DEPARTED DAMASCUS FOR CAIRO MORNING AUG. 30 AND ASF COMMANDER RETURNED TO BEIRUT. LEBANESE CHRISTIANS REPORTEDLY STUDYING PEACE PLAN PROPOSED BY DR. KHULI AND WILL REPLY TOMORROW.

3. AL SECGEN RIAD ANNOUNCED POSTPONEMENT OF FONMINS MEETING UNTIL SEPT. 4. PRESS CITED AFP DISPATCH WHICH CLAIMED HIS DECISION CAME AT REQUEST OF MANY ARAB STATES FOLLOWING KUWAITI CABINET CHANGE.

4. MEDIA REPORTED RELATIVE CALMNESS PREVAILED IN BEIRUT DESPITE SOME CLASHES IN ITS SUBURBS. EXCHANGE OF ARTILLERY FIRE TOOK PLACE IN MOUNTAINS.

5. MEDIA GAVE PROMINENT ATTENTION TO SUCCESSFUL RETURN PREVIOUS DAY OF FIRST CONVOY OF NABBAA EVACUEES TO THEIR HOMES. CONVOY COMPRISED 1,000 EVACUEES IN 150 VEHICLES ESCORTED BY SYRIAN OFFICERS, LEBANESE ARMY VANGUARDS, REPRESENTATIVES OF MUSA SADR AND PRESS CORRESPONDENTS. SECOND CONVOY SCHEDULED TO RETURN IN COMING FEW DAYS. MEDIA NOTED THAT NUMBER OF INHABITANTS OF NABBAA AND BURJ HAMMUD WHO FLED TO BEKAA AND SOUTH LEBANON ABOUT 180,000. MEDIA DESCRIBED THIS INITIAL SUCCESS AS "DEADLY BLOW TO PARTITION SCHEME AND SIGN THAT COHESION RESTORED AMONG LEBANESE PEOPLE".

6. CABINET MET YESTERDAY AND AMONG OTHER TOPICS HEARD KHADDAM REPORT ON RECENT LEBANESE DEVELOPMENTS.

7. PRES. ASAD RECEIVED CABLE SUPPORTING SYRIAN INITIATIVE IN LEBANON FROM GREEK ORTHODOX BISHOP OF AKKAR.

8. BAATH PARTY DEPSEC GEN ABDULLAH AL-AHMAR MET WITH IMAM MUSA SADR PREVIOUS DAY TO DISCUSS ACTIVITIES OF NATIONALIST FORCES IN LEBANON TO RESIST PLOT DIRECTED AGAINST LEBANON, SYRIA AND PLO. MURPHY

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